United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement, reiterates its concern for Haitian people in ongoing crisis and its determination to lessen impact on vulnerable groups; welcomes imminent arrival of fuel shipment in Haiti and warns against interference with humanitarian deliveries.

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement on Friday, demands immediate end to attacks against Sarajevo; says it is ready to consider further measures to ensure that all parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina abide by their commitments.

+ Secretary-General, in Paris, meets with special envoy of Zairian President; presents new initiative to reinforce Zaire's unity and to stabilize situation there; visits French National Assembly and addresses Commission of Foreign Affairs.

+ Success of UNOSOM II is threatened by inadequate human and financial resources, Secretary-General says in report to Security Council; recommends that operation deploy 16,000 troops to protect ports, convoys and refugees, retain self-defence capability, and rely on Somali cooperation to achieve disarmament.

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The Security Council today reiterated its deep concern for the plight of the Haitian people and reaffirmed its determination to minimize the impact of the ongoing crisis on the most vulnerable groups in Haiti. In a statement read out on by its President, Karel Kovanda (Czech Republic), the Council welcomed the imminent arrival in Haiti of a fuel shipment approved by the Committee established by resolution 841 (1993). It also welcomed the role of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in the delivery of fuel for humanitarian purposes.

The Council said it attached great importance to humanitarian assistance in Haiti. It stressed that it would hold responsible any authorities or individuals who interfered with the delivery of assistance under the aegis of PAHO, or who failed in their responsibility to ensure that deliveries benefits

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the intended recipients. The Council said it would also hold responsible anyone who endangered the security and safety of personnel involved in such assistance.

The Council reaffirmed its determination to ensure the return to constitutional legality in Haiti. It stressed that the process defined by the Governors Island Agreement, which provided, inter alia, for the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was the only viable framework for the country's emergence from the crisis and for the establishment of a State under the rule of law.

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The Security Council has demanded an immediate end to attacks against Sarajevo, which have resulted in a large number of civilian casualties, disrupted essential services, and aggravated an already severe humanitarian situation. In a statement read out on Friday night by its President, Karel Kovanda (Czech Republic), the Council said it was ready to consider further measures to ensure that all parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina abide by their commitments.

The Council condemned any hostilities in United Nations-designated "safe areas", particularly the recent relentless bombardment by Bosnian Serb forces of Sarajevo. Strongly deploring the deliberate obstruction of humanitarian relief convoys by any party, the Council reiterated its demand for unimpeded access for humanitarian relief assistance. It also deplored the failure of the parties to honour their agreement to implement the cease-fire, condemned the flagrant violations of international humanitarian law and held the perpetrators personally responsible.

The Council reaffirmed its commitment to implement all its relevant resolutions, in particular resolution 836 (1993), by which it had authorized the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to use force to protect Sarajevo and five towns previously declared "safe areas" in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council also condemned recent attacks against personnel of the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations and reiterated its demand that all parties ensure their safety and security.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, on the first leg of his visit to Europe, met today in Paris with Mokolo Wa Mpombo, special envoy of President Marechal Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire. He gave the special envoy a message addressed to President Mobutu in which he presented a new initiative to reinforce Zaire's national unity and to prevent a further deterioration of the situation there. The Secretary-General was accompanied by Lakhdar Brahimi, his Special Envoy for Zaire.

According to a United Nations spokesman, the Secretary-General then went to the French National Assembly where he had a tête-à-tête with Assembly President Philippe Seguin and attended a luncheon in his honour hosted by the

President of the Assembly's Commission of Foreign Affairs, Valery Giscard d'Estaing. The Secretary-General later addressed the Commission.

Yesterday, Mr. Boutros-Ghali met with the Prime Minister of Canada, Jean Chretien, who was accompanied by his Foreign Minister and Chief of Staff. On Saturday, the first day of his visit, the Secretary-General had a half-hour meeting with the President of France, François Mitterand, at the Elysee Palace.

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It is doubtful whether the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) will have the required level of resources to successfully continue its current mandate after 31 March, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In a report to the Security Council dated 6 January, he noted that UNOSOM II's military strength would fall to 19,700 after that date, and that operations were threatened by financial shortfalls.

The Secretary-General said that only a comprehensive mandate would allow UNOSOM II to create a secure environment and to accelerate efforts to help the Somali people rebuild their country. However, it would be impossible to provide it with an extra brigade and a capacity for coercive disarmament -- the option which he preferred. He therefore recommended a second option, whereby UNOSOM II would not use coercive methods but would rely on the cooperation of the Somali people. It would deploy some 16,000 troops to protect ports, convoys and refugees and would retain some capability to defend its personnel.

However, the Secretary-General said he was not confident that UNOSOM II would have adequate resources, or that Somali leaders would have advanced enough towards reconciliation, for even the second option. He cited the continued negative attitude of the Somali National Alliance, reports of an arms build-up by all factions, and renewed inter-clan fighting and banditry. The Secretary-General stressed that UNOSOM II needed the cooperation of the Somali parties and warned of a danger of civil war without reconciliation and the re-establishment of the institutions of law and order. He went on to say that if the Somalis succeeded in establishing a working Transitional National Council soon it would be a "significant development" and might have a bearing on UNOSOM II's mandate.

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